

Exploring Business Attitudes toward the Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar Line



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The project on which this report is based was completed in collaboration with Ramsey County as part of the 2018–2019 Resilient Communities Project (RCP) partnership. RCP is a program at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) that connects University faculty and students with Minnesota communities to address strategic projects that advance local resilience and sustainability.

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Resilient Communities Project

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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EXPLORING BUSINESS ATTITUDES TOWARD THE RIVERVIEW CORRIDOR MODERN STREETCAR LINE

Ashleigh Walter
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INTRODUCTION

The Riverview Corridor is a proposed 12-mile modern streetcar route that would connect Union Depot in downtown St. Paul with the Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport and Mall of America. A significant portion of the route would be along West 7th Street in St. Paul. Cities and counties along the corridor formally adopted a locally preferred alternative (LPA) in summer 2018, designating modern streetcar service as the preferred mode of transit.

Implementation of modern streetcar along the West 7th Street corridor is likely to entail the removal of some on-street parking, significant construction timelines, and modification of street design. Based on comments received from business owners and the public during the Riverview Corridor pre-project development study, there is concern that the loss of on-street parking at certain nodes along the corridor could impact access to businesses and create a spillover parking effect in surrounding neighborhoods. Other concerns included aesthetics, noise, pedestrian/bike safety, and long-term impacts on the affordability of housing and commercial-retail space along the corridor.

This report summarizes a project conducted during fall 2018 through the Resilient Communities Project's (RCP) 2018–2019 partnership with Ramsey County. The County had previously identified a need for deeper engagement with the business community along the West 7th Street corridor to better understand their concerns related to the Riverview Corridor proposal and learn about their preferences for mitigation strategies as the project moves into the environmental review phase in 2019.

Working with a list of businesses identified by the County, a graduate research assistant with RCP conducted outreach and engagement to owners and operators of commercial and multi-family residential properties along West 7th Street. Individuals were invited to participate in a focus group or one-on-one interviews to answer questions about their concerns and preferences related to the proposal. Information collected from these outreach efforts was analyzed for key themes, which are identified in this report. The report also provides recommendations to Ramsey County related to the Riverview Corridor project and future outreach and engagement efforts.

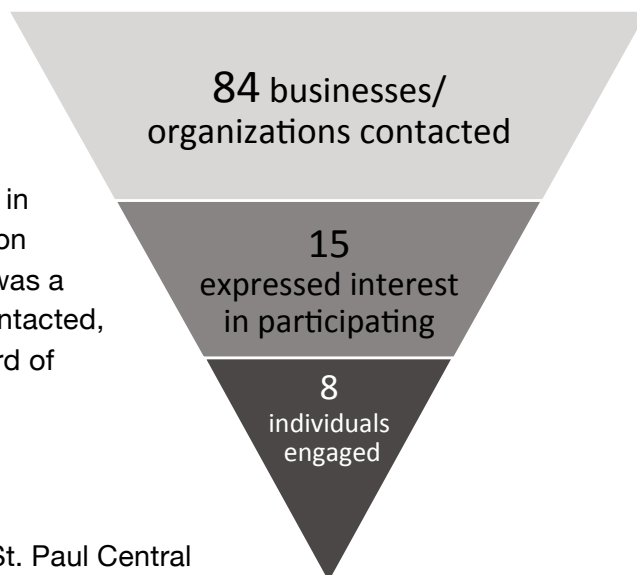
METHODOLOGY

At the beginning of the project, Ramsey County provided a list of 84 businesses, organizations, and apartment complexes located along West 7th Street (Appendix A). According to County staff, the businesses on the list were chosen because they did not weigh in with an opinion during the Riverview pre-project development study and are therefore likely less aware of the project than the business associations and businesses that were actively involved during the study. The list included business names and type, street addresses, and phone numbers obtained from County records. Emails were obtained for as many organizations as possible using contact information available online.

A bulk mailing was sent in October using the addresses provided by the County. The mailing included a letter describing the study and opportunities for participation, and a flyer with information about the streetcar proposal (see Appendix B). For those businesses for which an email address was discovered, an email message containing these materials was also sent. Both messages included a link for interested business owners or operators to sign up to participate in a focus group or one-on-one interview. To encourage participation by representatives of hotels and apartments complexes along the corridor, approximately 17 follow-up phone calls were made to these establishments.

Response Rate

Of the 84¹ businesses contacted, 15 individuals (18%) expressed interest in participating in the study. Of these, four individuals participated in a focus group hosted in mid-November, and four participated in in-person or phone interviews. One of these participants was a business owner not on the list of businesses contacted, but who had heard about the study through word of mouth.



Focus Group and Interviews

One 90-minute focus group was hosted at the St. Paul Central Library. Interviews were scheduled using a web-based scheduling platform. One interview was conducted onsite at the business location and three were conducted via telephone. A sample of the script and interview protocol is included in Appendix C. Questions asked during the sessions were initially identified by Ramsey County staff, and were refined by RCP to produce the interview protocol. Prior to participation in focus groups or interviews, all participants were required to provide their written consent to participate in the

¹ The actual number of businesses reached was likely smaller, as some businesses were not reachable via email or phone, and five letters were returned as undeliverable.

² All focus group and interview participants were informed of how to find more information about the project, and

study (the consent form can be found in Appendix D). Participants were notified that their participation and identities would remain confidential and would not be shared outside of the RCP team completing the study, and that the interviews would be audio-recorded to ensure comments were accurately captured. Notes from these sessions with participants' identifying information removed is available in Appendices E and F.

MAJOR THEMES

Based on an analysis of the responses of all focus group and interview participants, the following major themes were identified.

Theme 1: Need for more information

A common theme across interviews and the focus group was participants' desire for detailed information regarding station placement, corridor redesign, traffic impacts, pedestrian safety impacts, construction timeline, and streetcar functionality. The RCP investigators were unable to provide most of the information participants requested.

Focus group participants agreed that well-timed information presented to businesses earlier in the process could help mitigate problems such as construction impacts on customers. One interview participant noted that proactive information could help determine the best business model during construction, which could include reduced hours or pop-up shops at alternative locations. When asked for additional comments or feedback at the end of the interview, another interview participant stated that they did not know enough about the proposed project to comment further.

Theme 2: Impact on parking/access may be a concern along West 7th Street, but less so on side streets

Concern over parking seemed to vary among participants. One individual with a business located on West 7th Street raised a concern that their private parking lot would be used as a "park-and-ride," with people driving to the neighborhood to ride the streetcar. Loading and unloading was a concern for another participant, who noted that frequent deliveries of materials could be a problem with a streetcar consuming parking or shoulder space on West 7th Street. Another participant noted the existing parking issues created by hospital employees parking on residential streets in the Little Bohemia neighborhood, and expressed concern that the streetcar could exacerbate the problem of already scarce parking by further impacting parking availability in nearby residential areas. Another participant who represented apartment buildings located one or more blocks from West 7th Street stated they were not concerned about parking impacts at their locations.

There was some interest expressed in a shared lot to replace on-street parking on West 7th Street, although this idea could not be explored in detail due to uncertainty about the future location of streetcar stations and reconfiguration of the design of West 7th Street.

Theme 3: Existing pedestrian/bike safety concerns along West 7th Street

Almost every participant cited high traffic speeds, too few crosswalks, lack of bike infrastructure, and use of middle turn lanes as a passing lane for automobiles as existing issues that create a dangerous environment for those who use the street. Two participants noted that

the current lack of bike infrastructure has directly impacted them or their family members through near-accidents with bicyclists or other automobiles on the road. Another participant noted that many bikers use the sidewalk, creating additional safety problems and conflicts for pedestrians and for automobiles pulling out of driveways or making turns off West 7th Street. There was some concern over how implementation of a streetcar would impact these already identified safety issues.

Theme 4: Differences in business opinion along the corridor

Based on the information gathered from this study, support for the Riverview Corridor proposal seems to vary widely, with support generally increasing as one moves south along the corridor, away from downtown St. Paul. One participant stated that they had heard from their store manager that all businesses in St. Paul are opposed to the project. Another individual who was not interviewed but who spoke briefly and candidly about their position in a phone call stated that businesses on the St. Paul side of the corridor that she was aware of were strongly opposed to the streetcar.

Another individual stated that soon after opening their business on West 7th Street, they were approached by someone from the West Seventh Business Association who asked them to display an anti-streetcar sign in their window. This participant also noted that the southern end of the corridor is not an incredibly well-to-do neighborhood, and that they believed most of their neighbors are supportive of the streetcar.

Theme 5: Concern and confusion about decision-making process

This theme is related to Theme 1, as it is likely rooted in a lack of information and uncertainty about the planning and decision-making process for the project. Confusion about the process was evident during both the focus group and one-on-one interviews. As previously noted, participants asked questions about the process and timeline that were too specific for RCP investigators to address. It is clear from this small sample that there is an interest in participating in the decision-making process going forward, but individuals were generally unsure about how to participate or what their options are for doing so.²

One interview participant stated that they believed the station locations have already been decided, and added they would like to see the stations and have an opportunity to provide feedback on placement and layout. One focus group participant noted that residents—in addition to the businesses contacted through this study—would likely be interested in deciding where the stations are placed. Another focus group participant said that they would like to be more involved in the process because the project could be great or could be horrible depending on decisions that are made.

² All focus group and interview participants were informed of how to find more information about the project, and were encouraged to sign up for the e-newsletter about the Riverview Corridor project

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1:



Based on the themes identified and the opinions shared by participants, an opportunity to learn about the proposal through visual means and to express feedback on design options is critical to involving businesses during the design and decision-making process. Participants commented on the difficulty of providing feedback without having an understanding of the project, what it might look like, who it would impact, etc. This was an especially common refrain when participants were asked about preference for design features (Question 3—see Appendix C). Visual depictions of the corridor, the station areas, and other elements of the project to reference would greatly help to advance these conversations and improve the quality and usefulness of feedback.

Visuals should clearly communicate the concept of the modern streetcar, perhaps using examples from other cities in the United States to build context and establish a norm for this mode of transportation. Participants indicated they would like an opportunity to weigh in on station placement and design. Visuals might include a map that participants mark with sticky dots to note desired station locations or places where crosswalks need to be improved. If locations have been pre-determined, participants could offer feedback on other elements of the design, such as parking impacts or crosswalk design (pedestrian-operated lights, bump-outs, etc.).

Recommendation 2:

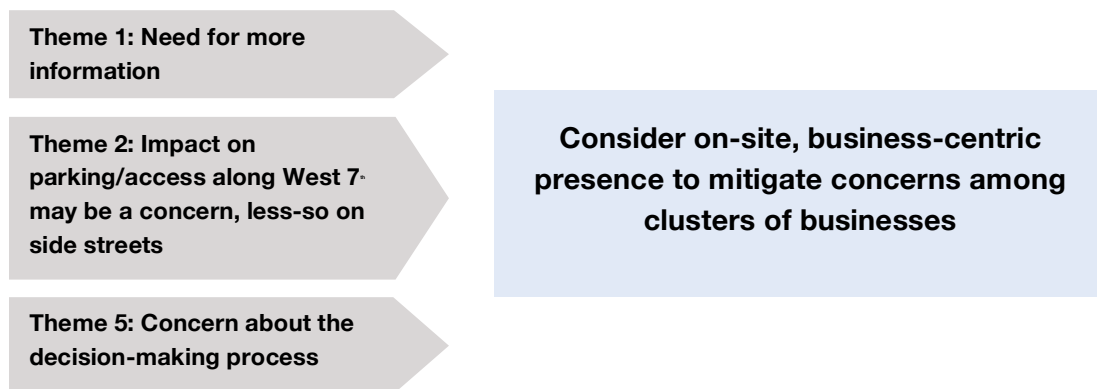


Generally, participants in this study seemed cautiously supportive of the proposal, provided that individual concerns are mitigated. However, it was acknowledged that others in the business community are strongly opposed to the project. One participant expressed interest in helping to organize an event to get the neighborhood excited about the project, and it is likely

that others would also consider being involved, based on the feedback received in the focus group. Allies in the business community could be instrumental in organizing others to be part of the process, and help normalize favorable opinions of the project that may exist but are stifled by stronger voices.

Partnering with businesses could also offer a chance to design engagement opportunities in a way that “makes sense” for the community and feels organic and community-driven. For example, an advisory group of interested businesses or community partners could be organized and allowed some autonomy in designing public engagement opportunities that are accessible. By building allies in the business community, the County could address the differences in opinion among businesses along the corridor by allowing allies to drive the conversation in support of the proposal.

Recommendation 3:



An approach to some of the concerns identified by businesses such as access for deliveries, potential for shared parking locations, and construction impacts could be addressed by fostering a sense of shared ownership of the project. In an on-site interview, a participant pointed across the street to another business owner, who was outside conversing with an employee of a neighboring business. It’s clear that the community along West 7th Street is tight-knit, and an authentic presence on the street would tap into this network and give business owners a chance to point out problems and discuss ideas in-person with planners and neighbors.

Hosting small gatherings with clusters of businesses in a 3-4 block stretch along the corridor early in the planning phase could provide an opportunity for County staff and business owners to walk the street and discuss proposed changes, stopping at each business site to note specific concerns raised, such as the need for delivery vehicle access. Potential mitigation strategies could be discussed, and businesses could be part of the conversation directly.

Recommendation 4:

Theme 1: Need for more information

Establish and prioritize proactive communication with businesses regarding construction impacts

The challenges presented by construction of the streetcar were among the first concerns raised by participants, who immediately referenced the months-long process to build the Green Line Light Rail project along University Avenue as a worst-case scenario for the streetcar project. As one business owner noted during an interview, the small, locally owned businesses along the West 7th Street corridor are especially susceptible to the damaging impacts of construction, as they typically do not have other franchise locations to balance out the impact of reduced patronage. If planners and public officials seek to preserve the unique small-business character of the neighborhood after modern streetcar has been introduced to the corridor, this issue poses significant challenges for the Riverview Corridor project.

Substantial time and resources need to be devoted to creating a communication system that allows businesses to easily access day-to-day construction updates so they can inform customers of potential impacts or pursue alternative business models. Personal communication with County staff would be ideal, and businesses could be grouped into nodes along the corridor to more easily target to these groups information affecting different nodes along the corridor.

It should be noted that the list of business contacts used for this study is not sufficient for communication about such high-stakes issues as street closures and construction impacts. There may be language barriers or other accessibility issues that prevented individuals from participating in this study that could also limit their ability to understand or respond to future information shared through email or direct mailings. Efforts to reach these businesses and establish communication prior to the start of the project should be a priority if businesses are to weather the impacts of construction.

Recommendation 5:

Theme 3: Existing pedestrian/bike safety concerns

Clearly address safety concerns through design of streetcar and pedestrian-centric infrastructure

Nearly every participant mentioned some form of safety concern with the current design and function of West 7th Street. A real concern is whether the implementation of modern streetcar would worsen these existing problems, which include high traffic speeds, poor pedestrian and bike safety, and inadequate lighting.

Pedestrian and bike safety should be a priority during the public engagement process, highlighting design elements that directly respond to concerns raised through this study. For instance, in discussing a future station design plan, elements such as a lighted crosswalk or street painting to denote bike infrastructure should be included and emphasized as a solution to concerns raised by the community. If the County can demonstrate that the proposal will mitigate existing concerns about West 7th Street, it will be more likely to gain local support for implementation of the streetcar, especially among those who are critical of the projects' potential to improve the character and functionality of the corridor.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF BUSINESSES CONTACTED

DOWNTOWN SAINT PAUL		
Business Type	Business Name	Business Address
apt/condo/hotel	The Saint Paul Hotel	350 Market St, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Heritage	410 St Peter St, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Kincaid's	380 St Peter St, St Paul 55102
professional	Image360	55 East 5th St Suite 201 D, St Paul 55101
restaurant	Chipotle	29 W 5th St, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Dunn Brothers Coffee	367 Wabasha St N, St Paul 55102
retail	Public Art Saint Paul	381 Wabasha St N, St Paul 55102
retail	Subtext Books	6 W 5th St, St Paul 55102
professional	Lighthouse Software	370 Wabasha St N Suite 700, St Paul 55101
retail	St. Paul Athletic Club	340 Cedar St, St Paul 55101
retail	Legacy Chocolates	141 4th St E Suite #223, St Paul 55101
restaurant	Hygga	213 4th St E suite 100, St Paul 55101
retail	Eclipse Records	419 Wabasha St N, St Paul 55102
retail	YWCA Minneapolis Children's Center at Ecolab	80 7th St W, St Paul 55102

West 7 th Street: Kellogg to St. Clair		
Business Type	Business Name	Business Address
restaurant	Eagle Street Grill	2521, 174 7th St W, St Paul 55102
apts/condo/hotel	Hampton Inn and Suites	200 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Seventh Street Truck Park	214 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Maharaja's	205 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Dilly Dally	261 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Children's Minnesota Saint Paul Hospital	345 Smith Ave N, St Paul 55102
manufacturing	T.D. Wright, Inc	292 Walnut St, St Paul 55102
retail	St. Croix Linen	286 7th St W, St Paul 55102
apts/condo/hotel	Sherman-Forbes Housing	310 7th St W #2, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Café Astoria	180 Grand Ave, St Paul 55102
professional	Saint Paul Labor Center	353 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	DeGidio's	425 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Bad Weather Brewing	414 7th St W, St Paul 55102
non-profit	Salvation Army	401 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Day by Day Café	477 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Eyes All Over	506 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Wulff-Godbout Funeral Home	560 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Associated Speech & Language Specialists	561 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Mac Donald Montessori School	175 Western Ave S, St Paul 55102
apts/condo/hotel	Winslow Commons	160 Western Ave S, St Paul 55102

professional	Minnesota Mortgage Financial	555 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Timberwolf Crossfit	600 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Pajarito	605 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Cooper's Foods	633 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Liquor Barrel	665 7th St W, St Paul 55102

West 7th Street: St. Clair to Montreal		
Business Type	Business Name	Business Address
non-profit	Keystone/West 7th Community Center	265 Oneida St, St Paul 55102
retail	J.W. Hulme Co.	678 7th St W, St Paul 55102
non-profit	RSI Labs, Inc	357 Oneida St, St Paul 55102
retail	The Beer Dabbler Offices	360 Toronto St, St Paul 55102
retail	Mohr Creations	601 Palace Ave, St Paul 55102
retail	Evla Pottery	928 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	The Bearded Mermaid Bazaar	953 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Apostrophe Salon	468 Osceola Ave S, St Paul 55102
professional	United Family Medicine	1026 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	BankCherokee	675 Randolph Ave, St Paul 55102
professional	The Phorographer's Guild	1031 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Leitner's Landscape Products center	630 Juno Ave, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Golden Chow Mein Restaurant	1105 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	West Seventh Pharmacy	1106 7th St W, St Paul 55102
non-profit	Joseph's Coat	1107 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Schneider Carpet One Floor and Home	1112 7th St W, St Paul 55102
apt/condo/hotel	West 7th Apartments	1145 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Mojo Monkey Doughnuts	1169 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Brake Bread	1174 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Garden Home Health Care	1184 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Tavail Grill	1199 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Limena Market	1211 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Fort Road Animal Clinic	1284 7th St W, St Paul 55102
restaurant	Bennett's Chop & Railhouse	1305 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Len's Automotive Services	1419 7th St W, St Paul 55102
apt/condo/hotel	Victoria Park Apartments	740 Victoria St S, St Paul 55102
professional	Nova Classical Academy	1455 Victoria Way W, St Paul 55102
apt/condo/hotel	Weinberg Apartments	760 Perlman St, St Paul 55102
retail	Barber Mug Barber Shop	1364 7th St W, St Paul 55102
retail	Mississippi Market	1500 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	DaVita Highland Park Dialysis	1559 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	American Family Insurance-Tschida Bryan Agency	1560 7th St W, St Paul 55102
professional	Apricity Acupuncture	1575 7th St W #104, St Paul 55102
retail	Oven Hearth Wholesale Bakery	825 Montreal Way, St Paul 55102
manufacturing	EMC School	875 Montreal Way, St Paul 55102

professional	Harris	4296, 909 Montreal Cir, St Paul 55102
professional	Jewish Family Services	1633 7th St W, St Paul 55102
apt/condo/hotel	Montreal Hi-Rise	1085 Montreal Ave, St Paul 55116
professional	Discovery Club	1780 7th St W, St Paul 55116
professional	Wings Financial Credit Union	1804 7th St W, St Paul 55116

West 7th Street: Montreal to the Mississippi River		
Business Type	Business Name	Business Address
professional	Dr. Bob Malley family Dentistry	1150 Montreal Ave, #104, St Paul 55116
professional	Bodymind Chiropractic	1150 Montreal Ave, #101, St Paul 55116
restaurant	Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que	1930 7th St W, St Paul 55116
restaurant	Mickey's Diner	1950 7th St W, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Highland on the Park	2000 7th St W, St Paul 55116
professional	Custom Rock Formliner	2020 7th St W, St Paul 55116
manufacturing	Pearson's Candy	2140 7th St W, St Paul 55116
restaurant	Seventh Street Social	2176 7th St W, St Paul 55116
manufacturing	Van Paper Company	2107 Stewart Ave, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Fort Road Flats	2242 7th St W, Highland 55116
professional	Deerwood Bank of Saint Paul	2310 7th St W, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Brandy Chase at Shepard Park Condominiums	2300 Benson Ave, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Stuart Co. apartments and condos	Owns several apartments on/near w 7th
professional	Highland Chateau Health Care	2319 7th St W, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Highland Apartments	1700, 1600 St Paul Ave, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Rockwood Place	2259 Rockwood Ave W, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	Sibley Manor Apartments	1300 W Maynard Dr, St Paul 55116
retail	Tobacco	2417 7th St W, St Paul 55116
retail	Yarmo Liquors	2489 7th St W, St Paul 55116
restaurant	Ras Restaurant and Lounge	2516 7th St W, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	The Pointe	1375 S Davern St, St Paul 55116
restaurant	Agelgil Ethiopian Restaurant	2585 7th St W, St Paul 55116
apt/condo/hotel	The Communities of River Crossing	1735 Graham Ave W, St Paul 55116
manufacturing	Big-D Construction	2706 Gannon Rd, St Paul 55116
restaurant	Bucca di Beppo Italian Restaurant	2728 Gannon Rd, St Paul 55116

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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*330 Hubert H. Humphrey Center
301–19th Avenue South
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Office: 612-625-7501

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Dear Business Owner:

The University of Minnesota is completing a study of local businesses and organizations along the Riverview Corridor, the proposed modern streetcar line that will connect Downtown Saint Paul with the MSP Airport and Mall of America via West 7th Street in Saint Paul. The study, which is intended to collect information from businesses and organizations to inform future steps of the project, was commissioned by Ramsey County and is being undertaken through the Resilient Communities Project (RCP), a program at the University's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA). **We are writing to invite a representative from your business to participate in the study by taking part in a focus group or one-on-one interview over the next 6–8 weeks to share your thoughts related to the modern streetcar line.**

By engaging the University to conduct this study, Ramsey County seeks to better understand local attitudes regarding the proposed modern streetcar line, and to use this information to inform future design and engineering and seek ways to mitigate issues of concern during construction and operation.

Your participation in this research is **completely voluntary**, and **your responses will remain anonymous**. The final report to Ramsey County will report only aggregated results from all interviews and focus groups, and any potentially identifying information (for example, your name or the name, address, or type of business you represent) will be removed.

Final results from the study will be presented to the County in early 2019 to inform decision-making before the project moves on to the environmental review and preliminary engineering phase next year. While additional opportunities to provide comments will be provided as the project moves forward, your participation at this point in the project allows County staff to proactively obtain feedback and consider mitigation options in advance.

If the owner, operator, or another representative of your business is able to participate in an interview or focus group, please take a moment to complete this form: <https://z.umn.edu/riverview-scheduling>. Our interviewer will be in touch soon to provide additional information, answer any questions you have about the interview, and schedule a time to meet with you.

If you have any questions about the University's work in gathering feedback to inform this project, please contact Mike Greco, RCP Director, at mgreco@umn.edu or 612-625-7501.

Sincerely,



Ashleigh N. Walter
Program Assistant, Resilient Communities Project (RCP)

Attention Businesses Along W. 7th Street:

Join us for a focus group or interview
to provide feedback on the Riverview Corridor

The University of Minnesota has been engaged by Ramsey County to conduct a series of interviews and focus groups with businesses and organizations along West 7th Street in St. Paul to gather feedback on the proposed Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar line. The modern streetcar line would connect Downtown Saint Paul with the Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport via West 7th Street. Comments received from the process will remain anonymous, and will be shared in aggregated form with Ramsey County staff, advisory groups, and local officials in advance of important decisions regarding the route.

The Riverview Corridor is a 12-mile proposed modern streetcar route that will connect the Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul and the Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America, as well as the neighborhoods in between. Modern streetcar vehicles can operate on the same track as light rail, but vehicles and stations are generally smaller than light rail vehicles and stations.



Modern streetcar in operation in Portland, OR.

Riverview Corridor Project Background

This summer, cities and counties along the proposed route adopted the project's locally preferred alternative, which includes modern streetcar service along portions of West 7th Street. Ramsey County will begin environmental review and preliminary engineering for the modern streetcar line in 2019. To inform this process, the County has partnered with the U of MN through the Resilient Communities Project (RCP) to implement a business-centric engagement process that focuses on gathering feedback from business owners and operators. This is an opportunity to provide input before decisions are made about the design of the modern streetcar.

About the University of Minnesota's Involvement

Staff from the Resilient Communities Project (rcp.umn.edu) will be hosting interviews and focus groups with business owners and operators. They will also analyze the input collected and provide the County with a summary report that will be shared with advisory groups, and local officials.

Input from businesses and organizations along West 7th Street will help inform:

- ✓ **Location, design and accessibility of stations** on West 7th Street
- ✓ Determinations of where the modern streetcar will operate in **dedicated right-of-way vs. in mixed traffic**
- ✓ **Future West 7th Street streetscape** (sidewalks, lighting, pedestrian crossings, landscaping, trees, and other elements that affect the look, feel, safety, and functionality of the street)
- ✓ **Station area plans** that establish a vision for future land uses near stations and new bicycle/pedestrian connections to stations
- ✓ Measures taken to **mitigate potential impacts during construction and operation**, such as noise and changes to parking in certain areas along West 7th Street

Register to participate in an interview
or focus group at
<https://z.umn.edu/riverview-scheduling>

For more information about the Riverview
Modern Streetcar project, visit
<https://z.umn.edu/riverview-streetcar>



APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCRIPT AND PROTOCOL

Introduction:

My name is Ashleigh Walter and this is _____, and we are both affiliated with the University of Minnesota. We're pleased you could all join us this afternoon/evening.

We've invited you today for a discussion about the Riverview Corridor modern streetcar line that is proposed for parts of West 7th Street. This proposed transit route would connect Downtown St. Paul, MSP Airport, the Mall of America, and the neighborhoods in between. Planning for the project is in the early stages, and construction would likely not begin until 2028, but this is a good time to provide initial input on the project. Today, we're going to be talking about both the potential benefits of the project, as well as things you may be concerned about.

This focus group is being conducted by the University of Minnesota at the request of Ramsey County. Although the County conducted public engagement about the proposed streetcar line between 2014 and 2017 as part of its pre-project development study, many businesses along W. 7th Street did not take part in those sessions. If you were invited to participate in this focus group, it's because the County identified your business or organization as one that provided little or no input during the pre-project development study. Today's focus group is not the only way you or others can provide feedback on the proposal--there will be many additional public engagement opportunities as the project moves through various planning and implementation phases.

The County wants to understand early in the planning process the business community's opinions, concerns, and ideas regarding the Riverview Corridor streetcar. The University has been engaged as a neutral party to conduct these focus groups and interviews. Neither the University nor the researchers conducting this study have a stake in the outcome; our role is simply to record your opinions today and to share them in aggregated form with Ramsey County. We are not affiliated with the streetcar project, so we won't be able to answer most questions about the technical details of the project.

You should feel free to express your opinions candidly. Neither your name nor any other identifying information you provide today (such as the name of the organization or business you represent) will be associated with the individual remarks you make here in any report shared with Ramsey County. At the end of the study, the researchers will share with the County a final report that summarizes the comments from all interviews with your name and all other identifying information removed. In addition, we will share a list of which organizations and businesses participated in the interviews (again, with your name or any other personally identifying information removed). We'll also be sharing the final report with the public. If you would like to be notified when the report is available, please be sure to indicate this on the sign-in sheet before you leave.

We're also going to be digitally recording the discussion today so that we don't miss any of your comments. In addition, _____ will be taking notes on the discussion.

Before we begin, there are a couple ground rules that will ensure we hear from everyone today and that we keep the discussion moving smoothly:

1. If you have a cell phone, please make sure it's on silent.
2. If you do need to leave the room, you may do so, but please return as soon as possible.
3. We have food/beverages so please help yourself as you need.
4. There are no wrong answers. People have different perspectives on or experiences with public transit and transit development. You should feel free to share your opinions, even if they are different than what others have to say.
5. My job is to guide the conversation, keep us on time, and ensure that we finish at the end of our 90 minutes today. At times I may interrupt or push us to the next question, but that's just so we finish on time.
6. Only one person has the floor at a time. Please do not speak over others or carry on side conversations. We'd like to hear from everyone today, so if I single you out to ask your opinion about something, it's simply to ensure that we hear from everyone.
7. We're going to be on a first name basis--we have name cards with our first names on them. Again, this information will not be included in any report that is shared publicly or with Ramsey County.

Let's go around the table, would you **"Tell us your name, which business or organization you're with, and your favorite place to eat or shop on West 7th Street."**

At this point, we will begin audio recording the discussion [TURN ON RECORDER]. This is just to ensure that we accurately document your comments. All of you signed a consent form acknowledging that you agreed to participate in this focus group, and that the conversation will be recorded. Is that correct? Did anyone NOT receive and sign a consent form? Great, then let's get started. . .

QUESTIONS:

1. **How have you heard about the Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar project?**

FOLLOW-UP:

1a. What have you heard about the project?

2. **What opportunities or benefits could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business?**

PROBES (if there are no opportunities/benefits that people can identify):

- 2a. Do you think the streetcar line could attract more people to live or shop in the neighborhood?
- 2b. Do you think the streetcar line could spur economic development in the corridor?

3. Implementation of the modern streetcar on West 7th Street would provide an opportunity to redesign the street. This could involve such things as wider sidewalks, fewer travel lanes, more trees and landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings and better lighting. What kind of design features would be most important to you and your business/organization?

FOLLOW-UP:

- 3a. Which of these would be most important to the neighborhood as a whole?

4. What problems could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business/organization?

FOLLOW-UP:

- 4a. How could these problems be mitigated?

5. Describe your business' parking needs for customers and employees. How many parking spaces need to be available to meet these needs?

FOLLOW-UP:

- 5a. How close does parking need to be to your business?
- 5b. Does parking need to be on the same side of the street as your business or can it be on the other side?
- 5c. Does parking need to be on the curb directly in front of your business, or could it be in a shared lot near your business?

6. How would you like to be engaged in the Riverview modern streetcar project in the future?

7. _____ has been taking notes, I'm going to ask them to give us a quick summary of the points we've covered tonight ... Is there anything we've missed?

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

About the Study

Ashleigh Walter is a master of public policy student at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey School of Public Affairs. She is a part-time employee with the university's Resilient Communities Project (RCP) at the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA), and will be conducting this study under the supervision of the primary investigator, Mike Greco, who is director of RCP.

The purpose of the study, *Exploring Attitudes toward the Riverview Corridor Streetcar Line*, is to support Ramsey County in its effort to better understand, plan for, and meet the needs of businesses located along the Riverview Corridor Streetcar Line.

Interviews will be conducted with individuals who own or operate businesses along the corridor in both individual and small-group settings. Interviews include questions related to disruption to businesses during construction, aesthetics, loss of on-street parking, noise, public safety, and long-term impacts on the affordability of housing and commercial-retail space along the corridor.

Participants will be recruited from member businesses that belong to local business associations along the corridor, including the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce, Highland Business Council, and W. 7th Business Council. Additional participants will be recruited using snowball sampling techniques with interview participants. Interviews will be conducted in venues familiar and convenient to participants.

All responses will be **confidential**; this means identities will not be linked with comments, nor will names appear in published reports. However, permission will be necessary to record the interview so that information conveyed can be accurately documented.

A signed, written consent to participate in this study will be obtained from each participant (who will also receive a copy). Participation in the study is voluntary. Respondents may end the interview or withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

This study and the protocol used for data collection meet the standards of the Institutional Review Board of the University of Minnesota.

Agreement to Participate in Research

Principal Investigator: Mike Greco, Director, Resilient Communities Project, University of Minnesota

Responsible Investigator: Ashleigh Walter, Graduate Student, Master of Public Policy Program, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota

Title of Protocol: Interview for *Exploring Attitudes toward the Riverview Corridor Streetcar Line*

1. You have been asked to participate in an individual or group interview to assess attitudes toward the Riverview Corridor Streetcar Line among owners and operators of businesses along the W. 7th Street corridor, located in Ramsey County, St. Paul, MN.

2. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete an approximately 30-minute face-to-face, tape-recorded interview between **October 8 and November 15, 2018**. The investigator will provide all forms and materials needed for completion of this study. You are also being asked for your permission to digitally audiotape this interview. Having access to audio notes helps the interviewer to accurately record and transcribe what is being said in the interview. These notes, whether written or audiotaped, will never be shared with anyone. However, **if you wish not to be recorded** (or have *only* certain segments of the interview recorded), only handwritten notes will be taken.
3. This study involves minimal risk and discomfort. The probability of harm and discomfort will not be greater than your daily life encounters—especially in a professional setting. However unlikely, risks may include emotional discomfort from thinking about or responding to interview questions.
4. You will not necessarily directly benefit from participating in this study. Indirect benefits will include contributing to Ramsey County’s capacity to anticipate and plan for the needs of local businesses during construction and operation of the Riverview Corridor Streetcar Line.
6. Although the findings of this study may be published, no information that can identify you will be included.
7. Questions concerning this research may be addressed to Ashleigh Walter at 612-626-4382 or rcpgra@umn.edu. Concerns or complaints about this research may be presented to Mike Greco, Director of the Resilient Communities Project at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, mgreco@umn.edu or (612) 625-7501.
8. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose not to participate in the study.
9. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in the entire study or any part of the study. If you choose to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on your relations with the University of Minnesota, Ramsey County, or any other participating individuals, institutions, or agencies.
10. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for your records, signed and dated by the student investigator.

Interviewee Signature

Date

Investigator’s Signature

Date

APPENDIX E: NOTES FROM INTERVIEWS

Participant: RC14-05

Date of Interview: 11/7/18

Business Role: Owner, rental properties

Interview Format: Phone

Q1: How have you heard about the Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar project?

Articles in the newspaper.

What have you heard?

They wanted to find some way of connecting Union Depot downtown to the airport.

Q2: What opportunities or benefits could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business?

No direct benefit to me as a property owner. However, a very valuable benefit to residents that we have in the immediate area, which I'm sure is more than 1000 people, plus other apartments and homes in the area in which we don't have any interest. And, it would be a benefit to our employees that come and go to work if this corridor was built.

Q3: Implementation of the modern streetcar on West 7th Street would provide an opportunity to redesign the street. This could involve such things as wider sidewalks, slower traffic, more trees and landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings and better lighting. What kind of design features would be most important to you and your business/organization?

I'd like it to be well-run and safe.

What does that mean to you?

The equipment is in good shape, it's run by responsible people, has a minimum of breakdowns and problems.

Are there any other design features you can think of that you'd like to see included?

No.

Q4: What problems could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business/organization?

No problems.

Q5: Describe your business' parking needs for customers and employees. How many parking spaces need to be available to meet these needs?

No needs that aren't being filled currently. We have off-street and underground garages. Sometimes people park on the side streets. The rail will not change the parking in our neighborhood that we're involved in.

Q6: How would you like to be engaged in the Riverview modern streetcar project in the future?

We just want to be kept informed of any progress. Not interested in being involved in other opportunities for public input.

Participant: RC14-06

Date of Interview: 11/16/18

Business Role: Owner, business

Interview Format: In-person

Q1: How have you heard about the Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar project?

Neighborhood newspaper- Highland Villager, Community Reporter.

What have you heard?

Mixed thing mostly. The West 7th Business Association has put up an anti-streetcar vibe but most of my neighbors want improved transportation. I was approached by the business organization a few months ago asking me to put an anti-streetcar sign in my window. Seems to be scattered pros and cons along the corridor.

Q2: What opportunities or benefits could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business?

It would be fantastic. I also live in this neighborhood. Advantages would be that it would slow down traffic. West 7th is dangerous for pedestrians and for my family- had two family members involved in or nearly involved in bike-car accidents crossing West 7th. It would also increase foot traffic in front of my business.

Not an incredibly well-to-do neighborhood, getting people more access is huge for the quality of life. I was part of the planning for the downtown bike capital city bikeway. West 7th is a great connector, but it's so "cars only." This would show people is actually doing what they're wanting to be.

Q3: Implementation of the modern streetcar on West 7th Street would provide an opportunity to redesign the street. This could involve such things as wider sidewalks, slower traffic, more trees and landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings and better lighting. What kind of design features would be most important to you and your business/organization?

All of the above. Long term planning is that we can't create corridors that favor cars over people. West 7th needs bike lanes, slower cars, needs directions for off-street parking. Currently the crosswalks are ignored. My daughter's been hit by a car on a bike. Need crosswalks with stoplights. Separated bike lanes would be great. Currently, there's lots of bike riding on sidewalks. Sidewalks are wide enough as-is, as long as bike infrastructure exists. The middle turn lane becomes a passing lane for cars.

Q4: What problems could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business/organization?

My biggest concern is that we get regular deliveries of product. There's been construction on a water main on the street, and delivery trucks have either had to stop traffic or park down the street. Obstructions in the street could present problems. If streets are closed during construction, how can businesses be proactive and adapt business model. I want to know what we can learn from other cities that have been through this.

How could this be mitigated?

Knowing the timelines, having plenty of heads-up so we can inform customers and plan ahead, and get community support for it.

Q5: Describe your business' parking needs for customers and employees. How many parking spaces need to be available to meet these needs?

We have a parking lot. Losing street parking would be an inconvenience for some customers. Most customers do park out front, but wouldn't.

Q6: How would you like to be engaged in the Riverview modern streetcar project in the future?

Update emails are great. The reality is that time is a constraint.

Anything else you'd like to share that we didn't cover?

Politics involved in business is difficult. There should be an event to get the neighborhood excited about this. I would be happy to be part of that kind of thing, like a pro-streetcar campaign. I'm also nervous about the implementation- no business ever does better during construction. So few of the businesses are franchises, so it's more risky.

Participant: RC14-07

Date of Interview: 11/14/18

Business Role: General Manager, business

Interview Format: Phone

Q1: How have you heard about the Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar project?

Piece of mail inviting me to take a survey about the project.

What have you heard?

Had heard about the possibility of it happening, saw one sign in a business' window saying don't allow it; that's been it.

Q2: What opportunities or benefits could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business?

For the labor force, it would be huge. The type of people that my business employs, the employees would have easier access to transportation.

I'm personally a huge fan of public transportation, getting away from cars. I would definitely use it personally, it would be great for the Xcel Energy Center, so much up and coming in St. Paul, this will help bring people to the area.

Q3: Implementation of the modern streetcar on West 7th Street would provide an opportunity to redesign the street. This could involve such things as wider sidewalks, slower traffic, more trees and landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings and better lighting. What kind of design features would be most important to you and your business/organization?

Landscaping would be good. Don't want any wider sidewalk- have to shovel in the winter. West 7th is so crowded, I don't know how they would [reduce traffic lanes]. Fewer lanes of traffic would cause more traffic so would like to keep them the same. Don't want to affect traffic too much, make it too difficult to get in and out of our location.

Q4: What problems could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business/organization?

Biggest challenge for us would be big trucks- we get deliveries often. Trucks not allowed on 35E, so there's lots of truck traffic on West 7th. As long as a streetcar doesn't upset that too much.

Q5: Describe your business' parking needs for customers and employees. How many parking spaces need to be available to meet these needs?

We have our own parking lot- in front and partially in back. We don't need parking on W 7th. Employees and customers park in our lots.

Q6: How would you like to be engaged in the Riverview modern streetcar project in the future?

Notifications about what's going on- mail, email.

Anything else you'd like to share that we didn't cover?

I don't know enough about the proposed project.

Participant: RC14-08

Date of Interview: 12/3/18

Business Role: Owner, business

Interview Format: Phone

Q1: How have you heard about the Riverview Corridor Modern Streetcar project?

Newspapers, County had a website for the project, they had meetings. Meetings, lots of meetings. Meetings of the advisory for the technical details, and for the policy, meetings for outreach in the neighborhood, one at Shalom. I went to several of the meetings.

What have you heard?

That they in conjunction with the city opted to do the study to figure out the best alternative between downtown and the airport, as far as how to get there, the vehicle.

Q2: What opportunities or benefits could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business?

I'm an internet business, I don't rely on people that can travel to me. The mode of transportation that is available locally is not a significant part of our business- streetcar vs. bus wouldn't make much difference on the impact of our business. No opportunities from a neighborhood perspective.

Do you think the streetcar would attract more people to the neighborhood or spur economic development in the corridor?

The neighborhood is unique. There's a need for improved transit on the scale that is appropriate for the neighborhood. There may be regional reasons that could justify from a perception point of view, I don't think the streetcar would improve. When they dropped the light rail, they were criticized in some corridors because they were opting for something that wouldn't be an improvement to bus in terms of speed. Some comments from meetings were that getting there fast is important for someone riding bus.

I've been riding the bus more lately. The river on one side and 35E on the other are existing barriers. It makes it harder to get to the interior of the neighborhood.

Would draw more emphasis on the transportation in the neighborhood- if that's seen as justified by the Met Council, I don't see any neighborhood benefits.

Q3: Implementation of the modern streetcar on West 7th Street would provide an opportunity to redesign the street. This could involve such things as wider sidewalks, slower traffic, more trees and landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings and better

lighting. What kind of design features would be most important to you and your business/organization?

I don't believe it's true that those benefits would follow from streetcar. The kinds of things the neighborhood deserves is safer street crossings, more frequent crosswalks crossing West 7th Street. In the vein of the Great River Passage plan (reconnect city with river, plan by City) suggested in the plan that West 7th and Shepard Road needed to be safer to cross in order to access the river. Rail would create more of a barrier that would inhibit this- more infrastructure, more controls, cross-arms. The ability to see safely is diminished for people or cars. Lots of people are getting hit by the Greenline. Loss of alley access. Streetcar would strive to go just as fast as it possibly can in traffic.

Q4: What problems could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business/organization?

High dollar projects- up-zoning. Historic character of the buildings, most of the businesses are businesses that have existed for many years. Historic character is in jeopardy. Not necessary for current ridership. Need transit improvements now, not 20 years from now.

How could these problems be mitigated?

Don't do the project. Pockets could stand infill. As far as the neighborhood is concerned, have tremendous resource in the river. Project would not bring any benefits to the neighborhood- the benefits would be regional.

Q5: Describe your business' parking needs for customers and employees. How many parking spaces need to be available to meet these needs?

Parking is crucial in the Little Bohemia neighborhood, because the hospital has paid parking and employees seek to park for free in the neighborhood, tightening parking in the neighborhood. Concern about people driving to the neighborhood, parking, then getting onto the streetcar. They've already planned it out, there will be 3 less stations than have with the 54 bus.

How close does parking need to be to your business?

Need 1 on-street spot.

Q6: How would you like to be engaged in the Riverview modern streetcar project in the future?

Need email contact with decision-makers. Like to understand better how Highland neighborhood could benefit from transit. I would like to see that Highland and West 7th get the same improvement. I would like to see stations and how they would fit. A chance to give feedback on exact placement, layout.

APPENDIX F: NOTES FROM FOCUS GROUP

Q1: How have you heard about? What have you heard?

RC14-02: Worked on mayor's race, issue was brought up a lot at forums and meet and greets. People were worried about the disruption of businesses during construction. Has not been involved in outreach so far.

RC14-01: That people don't like it in St. Paul. Store manager told him all businesses along W 7th are against it. He thinks he should be worried because others have been. Has not been involved in outreach so far.

Q2: What opportunities could a modern streetcar present for your business? For instance, Do you think the streetcar line could attract more people to live or shop in the neighborhood?

RC14-02: For those near Seven Corners area, modern street car would help businesses close to downtown. Could potentially bring more customers, but worried about impact in other locations on locally owned businesses rather than corporate-owned businesses.

RC14-01: Most of the customers in his business are either coming from home or work. Depending on how designed and where stops were, could benefit his business. But if stops are not convenient to his store, could hurt business. RC14-02 told him that on Green Line, mom and pop type businesses did not survive construction; instead, the LRT line benefitted big corporate businesses. Small businesses did not reap the benefits, so he is worried that his business would not survive to be around to see the benefit.

RC14-01: What would make it convenient to my store? Currently there is a bus stop on West Seventh that is right across the street from his store. There are people using the bus to go and come to work (employees) or to shop. He knows politically the automobile is seen as a dinosaur by a lot of people, and should go away, but for his business, automobile is used probably 60–70% of the time. So access to his parking lot during construction is a big deal – can customers and employees get to it, and can they use it? Turning wise, right now, people can make both right-hand and left-hand turns to get into parking lot. With streetcar, one of those turns might be eliminated.

Q2a: Thinking about the business or organization you represent, do you think the streetcar line could spur economic development in the corridor?

RC14-02: Depends on whether you're a locally owned vs corporate business. Reason it was changed from LRT to streetcar is because it was thought to be less impact during construction. On University Avenue, places torn up 6–12 months and could not get customers to the door. Is it a significantly shorter amount of time for the streetcar? They gave some tax incentives to some small businesses on University once they saw how much of an impact construction had. If it was a short time that the area was shut down and were giving

businesses subsidies, that could help. But people change their habits, so don't always get business coming back after construction. Would rather see benefit for locally owned businesses where profits stay in the state.

RC14-01: Been in business a long time. In his industry, a profit of 1–2% is good. There are many fixed costs of operating the business—electricity, labor costs, etc. Those fixed costs have to be paid, no matter how many customers or employees you have. What he has experienced at another location when highway was closed down for reconstruction, and in another location when a major bridge was closed, is that construction can create a significant loss of business. Would think business would come back afterward, but instead, have good and loyal customers and asking them to change their shopping habits. Once project is done, for some percentage of customers, they won't come back. His biggest fear is surviving the construction.

RC14-01: Depending on design, streetcar could help or hurt businesses. For busses, there are frequent stops, and that frequency and convenience is key to it helping business. Will it reduce bus service along W. 7th? People going from downtown St Paul to the airport is not a help to local businesses. Will it make it easier for people to shop at Walmart instead of along W. 7th? Walmart has put him out of business in other places.

Q3: Implementation of the modern streetcar on West 7th Street would provide an opportunity to redesign the street. This could involve such things as wider sidewalks, fewer travel lanes, more trees and landscaping, enhanced pedestrian crossings and better lighting. What kind of design features would be most important to you and your business/organization?

RC14-01: I have listened to highway engineers talk about these things in a different location. I understand it can increase throughput and make road work better, depending on how designed, but don't know how streetcar would affect design of the corridor.

RC14-03: Would like improved pedestrian crossings and lighting. Without knowing where stations will be, it's hard to know what the impacts will be. Right now, at W. 7th intersection at Snelling, given the amount of traffic, getting across street there is challenging

RC14-04: Childcare. There are lots of kids there, too.

RC14-03: There are lots of stretches without good lighting.

RC14-01: Dangerous for both pedestrian and automobiles. Velocity of traffic is such that, if you are driving and see person in crosswalk ahead of you and stop, you're going to get hit from the rear. Always 35–40 mph, and heavy traffic. Treating pedestrians the way you should is dangerous on that highway.

RC14-03: There are places where speed limit is 30, but no one gets pulled over on W. 7th for speeding.

RC14-02: Keep traffic moving and don't just make it look pretty. Has lived in places where lots of sidewalks, benches, planted medians in the middle of the road—but left with one lane of traffic in each direction, and if one person stops, everything stops. Needs to serve both traffic as well as pedestrians—both need to be taken care of. It's a road, after all—traffic is most important.

RC14-03: Asked if any traffic lights will be changed or added. [Facilitator explained that we don't know the answer to these sorts of questions.]

Q4: What problems could a modern streetcar on West 7th Street present for your neighborhood or business/organization?

RC14-03: Our impact would be around parking. They don't have parking on 7th street where they are located. Thinks it would be positive for residents—no negatives.

RC14-03: Around Snelling area, lots of traffic. How would it impact the rest of traffic? That would be a problem for residents in this area.

RC14-02: There are so many events in downtown St. Paul, and people right now treat their parking lot as a park-and-ride, parking in their lot and then walking or taking a bus to the event. If there was an actual park-and-ride further away, that would potentially reduce that problem, or maybe it would make it worse. The parking lot is not large, so just meets their needs.

RC14-03: Permit parking might solve that problem.

RC14-02: Or if additional off-street parking was provided in conjunction with the streetcar, that might help.

RC14-01: Bikes are a problem. Right now, when on W. 7th Street, there is no shoulder, so bikes can't pull over. He was traveling on the road recently and a bike almost caused an accident. Bikes don't work on W 7th now, so how will that work with streetcar? Can you also add a bike lane or move bikes to other places in the corridor?

RC14-03: Any information on eminent domain usage for this project? [Facilitator explained that we don't know the answer to these sorts of questions.]

Q4a: Thinking about planning for the corridor, how could those problems potentially be mitigated?

RC14-03: Hard to answer when don't know what the impacts will be.

RC14-01: Wants to know there will be access to his business—either off [a sidestreet] or W 7th Street. Lots of their employees use the bus to get to work. Will bus service still be there for them to get to and from work? Also a lot of customers who use the bus. Will they have access? If tearing up the street, will they upgrade utilities at the same time? If there will be this disruption and utilities are not being upgraded, then sometime in the next 10 years, there will be another disruption. Should be addressed at the same time.

EVERYONE: Agreement that more information to businesses sooner (i.e., answers to these types of questions) would be helpful.

Q5: Describe your business' parking needs for customers and employees. How many parking spaces need to be available to meet these needs?

RC14-01: They have a parking lot, and they own it. If leave it alone, they have enough. On-street parking could go away and it would not make any difference. It's not used very much because they have a decent parking lot. So long as the project doesn't take away parking from that lot, or have others using it, it's OK.

RC14-02: They do have a parking lot, and some on-street parking. Most of the time it's adequate. But use of on-street parking is constant—there is always someone parked there. For [two other businesses directly across the street], the spots in front of them are always occupied. If on-street parking disappeared, it would be a problem because those people would try to park in their lot. [A large organization nearby] has very small parking area. Also a lot of people taking bus to [that location when they have events]. So long as those people don't park in our lot, it's fine.

RC14-03: Have a small amount of on-street parking, but it's not on W. 7th. Also have surface and underground parking lots for residents. Will be more of an issue for vendors, mail delivery person, etc.

RC14-02: When they have events, they use on-street parking.

RC14-01: If people were going to use his lot for shared parking, that would be a problem.

RC14-03: Would be awesome to have shared lot to replace on-street parking. Parking is already tight from [Michigan Street] to downtown.

Q6: How would you like to be engaged in the project in the future – how would you like to receive information?

RC14-02: Email, or another focus group when you have some facts and answers instead of questions.

RC14-01: Have the people who design it hold a meeting explaining how designing it, why designing it that way, and have an opportunity to give feedback. Sometimes when an engineer explains what they are doing and why, it actually makes sense.

RC14-03: Primarily interested in pedestrian safety, so email is fine.

Q7: Do any of you see yourself being involved beyond just being informed or attending events?

RC14-04: Residents would be interested in deciding where stops go.

RC14-03: Curious about where stops would go as well. It will impact her neighborhood, so would be interested in knowing more.

RC14-01: Would like to be involved to any degree that he can. The project could be great, or it could be horrible, so he would like to participate and be involved however he can.

RC14-03: Will this really happen? And why streetcar and not BRT? [Facilitator explained that we don't know the answer to these sorts of questions.]

RC14-02: With such limited space to work with, how will it calm traffic? [Facilitator explained that we don't know the answer to these sorts of questions.]

RC14-01: In [another location he is familiar with in Carver County], they put in lighted pedestrian crossings, and pedestrians push a button to cross. On W. 7th, maybe reduce pedestrian crossings and put in one of those lighted pedestrian crossings. As a driver, it's very confusing now to navigate the pedestrian crossings on W. 7th because lots of streets intersect at weird angles and people cross everywhere. Eliminate the confusion—if there were a few less pedestrian crossings, and used those lights, it would give people adequate warning.

RC14-03: Right now, people go around stopped traffic when one car stops for pedestrians, creating a dangerous situation. Also a crosswalk version where the crosswalk is not lighted, but there is an overhead warning signal to drivers that pedestrians can activate. That could also work.